DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 110 629 CE 004 404

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TITLE Toward an Adult Learner Profile: An Administrative Report.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Buffalo. Div. of Continuing Education.
PUB DATE Jun 75
NOTE 23p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; Adult Programs; *Adult Students; College Programs; Demography; Educational Background; Evening Students; *Noncredit Courses; Participant Characteristics; Post Secondary Education; Racial Composition; *School Surveys; *Student Characteristics; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS Buffalo; State University of New York

ABSTRACT

The report describes a statistical study of persons in credit-free programs at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Designed to develop a survey instrument for determining an adult learner profile, the study was conducted among the 1,486 persons registered in such programs in the fall of 1974 (of whom 676 responded to the written questionnaire), a group analyzed to be highly representative of the sample universe. The study determined that in the sample: most students were white, most were affiliated with either the Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish religious denominations, most were 30-39 years old, most were married, the median family income was $12,001-$15,000, a plurality were employed in professional and technical occupations, and the median highest level of education was three to four years of college. Regarding student involvement with the credit-free programs, the study determined that: most students obtained information through brochures mailed to their homes; most students considered course topic as their prime consideration in course selection; although time of class meeting was of secondary importance, most students preferred weekday evenings; and of much less significance were location, transportation, and baby-sitter availability. Seven pages of the document present supporting tables. (JR)

TOWARD AN ADULT LEARNER PROFILE: AN ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A computerized inquiry into
selected administrative and background factors
affecting adult learners in non-credit programs
at the University level.

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June, 1975

TOWARD AN ADULT LEARNER PROFILE: AN ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

INTRODUCTION:

The adult educator-administrator in the University is faced with the task of developing knowledge about the quantity and character of the adult clientele he/she is attempting to serve. Adults are the new market for higher education in the short term because of the dwindling adolescent population, and in the long term because the American social and technological system demands a re-opening of educational channels for adults on many levels, recurrently throughout their lives.

Morever, the adult in the emergent learning society cannot be recycled through the normal adolescent pattern in higher education, but instead requires an understanding from the administrator that a new tailoring of the learning process and procedures for an adult population is needed. Not only do occupational and family factors force changes in the higher educational delivery system, but the certitude that different learner assumptions must be made about the adult does as well.

Since the earliest Thorndike studies and the Army studies in I.Q., such hallowed concepts as the age-learning curve and the terminal drop theory have been radically altered. Aging adults can and do learn as well as they ever did, and in some cases, the learning ability of adults apparently increases over time.

The educator-administrator, therefore, is faced with a twin problem: (1) learning the marketing function and (2) restructuring the general curriculum to suit adult needs. The key to solving both of these problems is a new type of knowledge aimed directly at creating an adult learner profile without which administrators operate inefficiently and errantly.

In marketing terms, the adult educator-administrator wants to know how to reach adults and this depends of course on who and where they are. In learning terms or "mathetic" terms, the adult learner profile is valuable in aiding the administrator in developing content, creating approaches to the teaching-learning process, and giving the content shape.

The enclosed study, completed at the State University of New York at Buffalo, is an attempt to begin creating an adult-learner profile, by designing a standard survey instrument which can be perfected and utilized longitudinally. The ultimate goal is to develop reliable information which is both theoretically and practically useful to those who manage adult education systems.

TOWARD AN ADULT LEARNER PROFILE: AN ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

PURPOSE

The present survey was conducted to meet both administrative and research needs for information on persons participating in Credit-Free Programs at the State University of New York at Buffalo. The survey aimed to provide administrators involved in the planning process with data that would enable them to plan more effectively. In addition to producing immediately useful administrative data, it was hoped that the survey would finally result in the further refinement of both the form and content of the survey instrument - the ultimate goal being an instrument which is easily administered, scored, and analyzed, and can be conveniently modified to meet changing information needs of educational planners.

The second major goal of the survey was to collect information on selected characteristics of the adults taking credit-free courses. Although there is a wealth of research available on the undergraduate college student, very little is known about the adults who seek out learning opportunities in non-credit programs. The survey attempted to begin to fill this void.

METHOD

SUBJECTS

Respondents were students in Credit-Free Programs during the Fall 1974 semester, taking courses which ended after October 11th.[1] Of the 1,486 persons registered in the 82 courses which ended during the survey period, 676 responded to the questionnaire.

PROCEDURE

An envelope containing questionnaires for the number of students registered for each course was hand-delivered or sent to each person teaching a credit-free course during the survey period. With the questionnaires was an explanatory

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[1]Nine courses ended before the start of the survey. No attempt was made to survey the 223 students registered in these nine courses.

letter, describing the purposes of the survey, and requesting the teacher's cooperation and giving instructions for questionnaire administration.

INSTRUMENT

The instrument of assessment was a self-report questionnaire consisting of 25 questions. Sixteen questions assessed background characteristics of students. The remaining nine questions collected administrative information.

Respondents were requested to record their answers on the questionnaires. Nineteen of the 25 questions required the subject to check the appropriate response. The other six questions required a written response. This type of response necessitated a lengthy scoring procedure, involving the transfer of answers to Master IBM sheets and typing these answers on computer cards. A more streamlined procedure would involve the subject's use of answer sheets that could be computer scored. Such a procedure would enormously facilitate data analysis.

RESULTS

REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE SAMPLE

Since 59 of 82 instructors returned completed questionnaires,it was necessary to establish the representativeness of the sample by comparing the distribution of two variables in the sample and in the population. These variables were, (a) the sex of respondent, and (b) the course type.

Sex was chosen as one of the variables since informal observation of class composition indicated that the sexes were not equally represented in all courses. This suggested that men and women might differ in interest in courses of various contents, in course times that would be convenient, and so on. These potential differences made it necessary to establish that the sexes were represented in the sample in proportion to their representation in the total population of Fall registrants. Of the 676 respondents, 39.5% were men and 60.5% were women. The sex distribution of the entire population registered for Credit-Free courses in

Fall, 1974, (1,706 students) was 35.6% men and 64.4% women. There was no significant difference between the sex distribution of the sample and the sex distribution of the total population (X^2=0.735, df = 1, p = ns).[2]

In addition to examining the representativeness of the response based on the sex distribution of the subjects, it was also possible to examine the representativeness of the distribution of types of courses in the sample of courses responding to the survey relative to the distribution of the various types of courses in session in the Fall semester, 1974. Four types of courses were defined: (1) Business, Industrial, and Professional (BIP), (2) Social Science, Humanities and Fine Arts, including psychology, sociology, and cultural courses (SS), (3) Natural Sciences, including mathematics and physical sciences (NS), (4) Skills and Crafts, including courses involved in the application of a practical and/or functional skill (SC). Since these courses differ considerably in content, it was possible that persons taking different types of courses would differ in ways besides the choice of a particular type of course. Therefore, it was necessary to establish that the proportional representation of the various types of courses in the sample was similar to their representation in the population. There was no significant difference between the distribution of the four types of courses in the responding sample and the distribution of the four types of courses in the Fall 1974 course roster (X^2=1.04, df = 3, p = ns) (see Table 1).

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[2]The chi-squared statistic (X^2) tests the similarity of the distribution of some categorical variable in the sample (e.g., sex) to the distribution of this same variable in the population under study. The larger the value of this statistic, the greater the difference between the sample and population distributions and the less likely the probability that the sample represents the population very well. In the present case, the calculated value of the statistic is small (X^2=0.735), so the probability that the sample distribution could have occurred by chance is very high (i.e., p = ns; the probability of the sample distribution differing from the population distribution is not significant.)

In summary, it is the opinion of the investigators that the sample of respondents was highly representative of the population of persons taking credit-free courses in Fall, 1974. Both the comparisons of sample to total population with respect to sex distribution and type of course distribution support this conclusion. The present study leaves a task of investigating whether Credit-Free Programs students who differ by sex and by type of course interest systematically differ in other ways. Such information about the nature of various subpopulations within the student body should contribute to more efficient planning.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

SEX

As previously mentioned, 39.5% of the sample were men and 60.5% were women. There were significantly more women than men in the sample ($X^2 = 4.40$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$).[3]

RACE

There were significantly more whites than non-whites in the sample ($X^2 = 488.0$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$). Of the persons in the sample 91.9% were white; 7.3% of the persons in the sample non-white (i.e., American Indian, black, Spanish American, yellow, and other). Six subjects (0.9% of the population) failed to signify their racial origin. At the present time it is apparent that Credit-Free Programs does not serve the non-white community equivalently. This is, in part, a function of mailing to suburban areas such as Amherst and Williamsville, N.Y., which are traditionally white. It may also be a function of a generally lower accessability to university-level education in the non-white community.

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[3] $p < 0.05$ means that there were less than five chances in 100 that this sex distribution could have occurred in the sample if the population was equally divided between men and women. This is a conventionally accepted level of significance for concluding that the population was not evenly divided and that women accounted for a greater proportion of students.

RELIGION

The majority of the persons in the sample reported that they were affiliated with one of the three major American denominations (42.6% Catholic; 27.5% Protestant; 10.7% Jewish). (See Table 2.) Seventeen persons (2.5% of the sample) declined to state religious preference.

AGE

The mean age group of respondents was 30-39 years, with a standard deviation of ± one ten year interval.[4] However, more persons reported themselves to be members of the 20-29 year age group than any other age group. (See Table 3.) Five subjects (0.7% of the sample) did not give their age.

This survey was conducted just prior to the introduction of the Senior Scholar Program, a local attempt to enlist older citizens in educational programs. The effectiveness of that program may be evaluated by comparing the small percentage of persons in the 60 years old and over age group in Fall, 1974, with the numbers of persons in the Senior Scholar Program in subsequent registrations.

MARITAL STATUS

The majority of the survey respondents were married (59.8%). Single persons comprised 31.8% of the sample, with divorced, separated and widowed persons accounting for another 7.7%. Five persons (0.7% of the sample) did not report marital status.

FAMILY INCOME

The median family income was in the $12,001-15,000 bracket. (See Table 4.) The range of the distribution was "$5,000 and below" to "$30,001 and above". Forty-three persons (6.4% of the population) did not answer the question.

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[4] Standard deviation is a measure of the central tendency of a distribution, the degree to which scores on some variable (e.g., age) tend to cluster around the mean. Sixty-eight percent of the cases on a normally distributed variable must lie within one standard deviation of the mean. In this case, at least 68% of the respondants are between the ages of 20 and 49, within one ten year interval of the mean age interval.

Of the respondents 52.2% were the principal wage earners and 3.7% declined to answer the questions.

OCCUPATION

The largest occupational category was the professional-technical group (30.8% of the sample). Clerical workers formed the second largest occupational group (14.9% of the sample). (See Table 5.) Of the sample, 15.4% (104 persons) did not give their occupations.

EDUCATION

The level of education in the sample was considered high. The median highest level of education was three to four years of college (33.9% of the sample), with a standard deviation of one to two years of education. (See Table 6.) Only three persons (0.4% of the respondents) did not check their highest level of education. Further evidence of the relatively high level of education in the survey sample is provided by the relative frequency with which various degrees were received. -----(See Table 7.) Of the respondents 54.3% held bachelors degrees.

In addition, Table 8 suggests that more persons taking Credit-Free Programs had earned degrees, certificates or licenses in the relatively recent past (1960 to present) than had earned them in the more distant past (1959 and before). Perhaps persons who have a reasonably current pattern of educational involvement are more interested in continuing that involvement than persons whose formal education has long been over. On the other hand, it is also possible that the distribution of degrees, certificates and licenses by dates of conferral is a function of the age distribution of the sample (i.e., younger persons being more likely to have received degrees recently than older persons). It is not possible to choose between these two alternatives based on the results of this study.

Some persons taking Credit-Free Programs were also enrolled for credit. Of the respondents 2.8% were enrolled full time, while another 11.5% were enrolled

on a part time basis. Of these 97 people, 77.3% were either enrolled at SUNY at Buffalo or Millard Fillmore College, in credit-bearing courses.

We have no means of determining from present data whether the courses taken by these students were used to supplement their credit program or as recreation. However, the gathering of this information might be worthwhile since it could suggest new areas for expanding course offerings to respond to needs of students that are not currently being met by their credit granting programs.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

How do students find out about the program? What factors are considered in taking Credit-Free courses? What kinds of courses are of interest to students? When should these courses be scheduled? These are some of the questions which the following data attempts to answer. It is hoped that this information will be useful to administrators planning Credit-Free Programs.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

In an effort to check on the effectiveness of advertising used by the Office for Credit-Free Programs, subjects were asked to check the source of their information about the programs. Among the alternatives provided were various advertising methods currently being used: newspaper, radio, or TV ad, company source such as a supervisor, bulletin board, or newsletter, mailing, SUNY at Buffalo bulletin board, and advisors or counselors. By far, the most popular source of information was the standard flyer mailed to the person's home. Three hundred thirty-two persons (49.0% of the sample) reported being contacted in this manner. The second most important source of information was the personal recommendation of a friend, relative or colleague (148 persons; 21.9% of the sample). (See Table 9.) According to this information the least influential source of program information was the radio or TV advertisement (7 persons; 1% of the sample). However, because of the wording of the question, the subject was asked to give only one response. Clearly,

few of the persons in this survey considered radio or TV ads their primary source of information about the program. What we do not know is whether or not these ads served as reminders of the program, its specific offerings, or its deadline dates for registration. A question which requested the subject to list all the sources of his information about Credit-Free Programs might be more appropriate to elicit this information.

ZIP CODES

As previously noted, the most valuable source of information about Credit-Free Programs is a brochure mailed to the home. The Office for Credit-Free Programs does extensive mailing each semester, often blanketing selected areas from which response has been heavy in former years. Respondents were asked to give their zip codes on the questionnaires, both as a check on the efficacy of concentrated mailing to residents in Amherst and Williamsville and to determine which other city or suburban areas might prove fruitful for future blanket mailing. Results are shown in Table 10. A total of 78 zip codes was recorded. Ten of these accounted for 54.9% of the survey sample. Eight more areas accounted for an additional 16.5% of the sample; while the remaining 50 zip codes only represented 20.0% of the respondents. Of the persons 8.6% in the sample omitted the zip code question. As expected, more respondents came from Amherst and Williamsville than from any other areas. Unfortunately, no comparable figures are available for the period before mass mailing to these two areas was initiated, so that it is not possible to statistically determine the effect of these procedures. Tonawanda and the Bidwell area of Buffalo ranked next in numbers of respondents participating in the survey. These areas are urban-suburban, older sections of Buffalo.

NUMBER OF CREDIT-FREE COURSES PREVIOUSLY TAKEN

There was no significant difference between the number of persons who had taken one or more Credit-Free courses and the number of persons who had taken no Credit-Free courses. Three hundred thirty-six (49.7% of the sample) were first time students of Credit-Free courses. Two hundred ninety-five persons (43.8% of the sample) had taken one or more Credit-Free courses in the past. Of this latter group, 63.7% had

previously taken one or two courses, while the remaining 36.3% had taken from three to more than five courses. This information in itself was not sufficient to make any judgments about the usefulness of sending brochures to former students. However, should such a program be instituted, the data would serve as a base line for research on its effectiveness.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Respondents were asked to rank in order of importance six factors to be considered in taking Credit-Free courses. The six factors were: fee, time, topic, location, transportation, and availability of a sitter for children or invalid. Table 11 shows proportions of persons who assigned each rank from 1 = most important to 6 = least important for every factor. Agreement of the majority of persons on the most appropriate rank for the two factors (i.e., topic and time) considered most important was quite high, as was agreement on the two factors (i.e., transportation and sitter availability) considered least important. However, although it was generally agreed that fee and location were moderately important factors to be considered when taking a Credit-Free course, there was no clear agreement on their order of importance relative to one another.

TOPIC

Over 80% of the subjects considered the topic the most important factor to consider in deciding whether or not to take a Credit-Free course. To discover more about respondents' preferences for various topics, respondents were requested to check the subject areas in which they would like to see course offerings expanded. There were six areas on the list: practical skills, social sciences, physical sciences, occupation-related, recreation, and other topics. Table 12 indicates the proportions of persons in the sample requesting that each area be expanded. Practical skills and occupation-related skills were the most popular categories. However, responses to this question must be viewed conservatively since there was some evidence to assume that the agreement between subjects as to the domain defined by each category was not high. For example, a course such as computer science which

was occupation-related for one subject was listed as a practical skill by another.

In assessing the nature of the respondent's interest in the topic of the course he or she is presently taking, it was discovered that 14.3% of the respondents were taking courses required for use in their occupations and an additional 24.7% were taking courses that were occupation-related though not required. Of the subjects 26% were pursuing a new interest.

TIME

Scheduling of the time of the course was rated as the second most important factor to be considered in deciding to take the course. Subjects were asked to check the time (morning, afternoon or evening) each day of the week in which they could take Credit-Free courses. When more than one time was equally convenient, respondents often checked more than one time period in a day. Furthermore, when no time period was convenient, respondents checked no time periods. All responses were recorded in an effort to determine whether or not other time periods might be utilized to good advantage besides those in which courses are presently scheduled. The results are shown in Table 13. As expected, weekday evenings proved most popular (especially Monday through Thursday). The numbers of persons available for courses in the mornings and afternoons are considerably smaller than those available in the evenings.

Another time factor is the length of time the course runs. Respondents were asked to state their preference for the length of the course. Of the sample 21.3% stated that they had no preference for course length. Of those who expressed a preference for course length, there was no significant difference between the numbers of persons preferring shorter time periods (6 and 8 weeks) and the numbers of persons preferring longer time periods (10 and 15 weeks). The distribution of preferences for different course lengths appears in Table 14. Twenty-eight persons (41.1% of the sample) omitted this question.

LOCATION AND TRANSPORTATION

Location and transportation to class were ranked in the less important half of the factors to be considered in deciding to take a Credit-Free course. This result is probably due to the fact that the majority of the respondents (87.1%) drive to class themselves. The remaining 11.2% are driven, take buses or walk. Twelve persons (1.8% of the sample) did not give their method of transportation to class. Although relatively less important than some other factors, students may yet have some clear priorities for the campus on which they would prefer that courses be scheduled. A question assessing location preferences should be included in a future survey.

SITTER AVAILABILITY

The factor ranked least important in deciding to take a Credit-Free course was availability of a sitter for children or invalids. The unimportance of this factor is explained by the low number of persons in the home requiring supervision. Of the respondents 60.1% had no one living in their homes requiring supervision, while only 37.8% of the respondents had persons living in their homes requiring supervision. This is a statistically significant difference ($X^2 = 24.8$, df = 1, p 0.001). Fourteen persons (2.1% of the respondents) did not answer this question.

SUMMARY

The present study summarizes results of a survey which attempted to determine information on selected characteristics of persons taking Credit-Free Programs. An additional aim of the survey was to collect data that could be used by program planners. The survey results are a useful first step in the creation of a data bank about persons who choose to continue their education along a credit-free track. It is to be hoped that the amassing of such information will eventually lead to a greater understanding of the factors motivating individuals to engage in this type of activity, so that the program can be extended to serve an even larger portion of the community.

TABLE 1

X^2 comparison of the proportional distribution of types of courses in the population of courses running in Fall 1974 Credit-Free Programs with the proportional distribution of types of courses in the survey sample.

	TYPES OF COURSES*			
Courses	BIP	SS	NS	SC
Total Population	14.3	37.4	7.7	40.7
Survey Sample	15.3	35.6	10.2	39.0

*Legend: BIP - Business, Industrial and Professional
SS - Social Sciences, Humanities and Fine Arts
NS - Natural Sciences
SC - Skills and Crafts

TABLE 2

Absolute and relative frequency distribution of religious preference.

Religious Preference	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
Catholic	288	42.6
Jewish	72	10.7
Protestant	186	27.5
Other	37	5.5
None	76	11.2
Non-respondents	17	2.5

TABLE 3

Absolute and relative frequency of various age groupings.

Age Groups	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
19 and below	22	3.3
20 - 29	260	38.5
30 - 39	159	23.5
40 - 49	126	18.6
50 - 59	71	10.5
60 - 69	29	4.3
70 and above	4	.6
Nonrespondents	5	.7

TABLE 4

Absolute and relative frequency of various levels of annual family income.

Levels of Annual Family Income	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
5000 and below	28	4.1
5001 - 8000	57	8.4
8001 - 12000	140	20.7
12001 - 15000	99	14.6
15001 - 20000	134	19.8
20001 - 30000	115	17.0
30001 and above	60	8.9
Nonrespondents	43	6.4

TABLE 5

Absolute and relative frequency of various occupational categories.

Occupational Category*	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
professional, technical	208	30.8
managers, officials, proprietors	53	7.8
clerical	101	14.9
sales	50	7.4
craftsmen, foreman	17	2.5
operatives	5	.7
service except private household	16	2.4
laborers except farm and mine	3	.4
students	26	3.8
housewives	69	10.2
retired, unemployed	24	3.6
nonrespondents	104	15.4

*Occupation categories are taken from Backstrom, C.H. and Hursh, G.D. Survey Research. Northwestern University Press, 1963.

TABLE 6

Absolute and relative frequency with which various levels of education were the highest levels of education completed by the subjects.

Level of Education	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
elementary school	9	1.3
high school	120	17.8
1-2 yrs. college	134	19.8
3-4 yrs. college	229	33.9
1-2 yrs. grad school	122	18.0
3-4 yrs. grad school	59	8.7
nonrespondents	3	.4

TABLE 7

Relative* and absolute numbers of degrees, certificates and licenses.

Types of Awards	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency* (Percent)
Associate's	79	11.7
Bachelor's	367	54.3
Master's	121	17.9
Doctorate	23	3.4
Certificate	93	13.8
License	101	14.9

*Proportions are proportions of persons in the sample rather than proportions of degrees conferred.

TABLE 8

Relative* and absolute frequencies with which various numbers of degrees, certificates and licenses were earned by respondents during various time periods.

Number of Awards Received

	1		2		3		4	
Time Period	Absolute	Relative	Absolute	Relative	Absolute	Relative	Absolute	Relative
1919 & before	2	.3						
1920 - 1929	8	1.2	1	.1				
1930 - 1939	20	3.0						
1940 - 1949	48	7.1	4	.6			1	.1
1950 - 1959	58	8.6	20	3.0			1	.1
1960 - 1969	172	25.4	27	4.0	8	1.2		
1970-present	167	24.7	45	6.7	7	1.0		

TABLE 9

Relative and absolute frequency with which various sources of information about Credit-Free courses were cited by respondents.

Sources	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
friend, relative, or colleague	148	21.9
newspaper	68	10.1
radio or TV ad	7	1.0
company, newsletter, supervisor, etc.	48	7.1
mailing to resident	332	49.0
UB bulletin board	38	5.6
advisor	14	2.1
other sources	48	7.1

TABLE 10

Relative and absolute frequency with which persons come from various locations by zipcode.

Location	Zipcode	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
Williamsville	14221	74	10.9
Amherst	14226	66	9.8
Tonawanda	14150	39	5.8
Buffalo (Bidwell, Richmond, Elmwood, Nottingham Drive)	14222	36	5.3
Buffalo (Bailey, Kensington)	14215	32	4.7
Buffalo (Hertel)	14216	30	4.4
Buffalo (Parkside at UB)	14214	27	4.0
Hiler Br. (bordered by Amherst, Kenmore Br.)	14223	24	3.6
Buffalo (Richmond to Niagara River)	14213	20	3.0
North Cheektowaga	14225	20	3.0
	Subtotal	....	54.9
Kenmore	14217	19	2.8
Orchard Park	14127	17	2.5
West Seneca	14224	15	2.2
Buffalo (Clinton, William)	14206	14	2.1
Hamburg	14075	13	1.9
South Cheektowaga	14227	12	1.8
Buffalo (Genesee, Walden, Best, Humboldt)	14211	11	1.6
South Park	14220	11	1.6
	Subtotal	....	16.5
	Total	....	71.4
50 other zipcodes			20.0
Non-respondents		58	8.6

TABLE 11

Proportions of persons assigning various ranks to 6 different factors to be considered in taking a Credit-Free course.

Factors	Ranks 1	2	3	4	5	6
Topic	82.5	6.5	2.7	1.5	.1	.3
Time	11.1	56.4	15.8	3.6	2.1	.7
Fee	4.4	11.5	29.6	22.8	12.6	5.2
Location	3.6	8.7	28.4	34.9	6.7	3.0
Transportation	1.9	.9	3.1	13.3	51.6	10.8
Availability of Sitter	1.8	1.5	2.4	3.3	4.6	60.4

TABLE 12

Absolute and relative frequency with which respondents requested that course offerings in various areas be expanded.

Area	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
Practical Skills	263	38.9
Social Sciences	169	25.0
Physical Sciences	70	10.4
Occupation-related	260	38.5
Recreation	173	25.6
Other Topics	79	11.7

TABLE 13

Absolute (A) and relative (R) frequencies with which respondents signified that a particular time period was a convenient one in which to take a Credit-Free course by days of the week.

Days of the Week

Time	Frequency	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
morning	A	62	67	69	56	51	175
	R	9.2	9.9	10.2	8.3	7.5	25.9
afternoon	A	39	50	57	45	48	94
	R	5.8	7.4	8.4	6.7	7.1	13.9
evening	A	416	449	453	428	291	81
	R	61.5	66.4	67.0	63.3	43.0	12.0

TABLE 14

Absolute and relative frequency with which respondents preferred various course lengths.

Preferred Course Length	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (Percent)
6 weeks	77	11.4
8 weeks	126	18.6
10 weeks	158	23.4
15 weeks	138	20.4
other	5	.7
no perference	144	21.3
non-respondents	28	4.1